Two cops, passer-by wounded shooting at Kharian

By Our Correspondent

GUJRAT: Two policemen and a passer-by were shot by the firing of five armed men near Jaura village of Saddar Kharian police precincts on Sunday.

Reports said the Attowala police check post had received a complaint of an aerial firing at around 11pm on Saturday in Jaura village. Responding to the call, the head of police picket along with the other policemen reached the spot.

Meanwhile, five suspects on two motorbikes were riding through the area and when policemen signaled them to stop, the motorcyclists opened fire at the police.

Four of the suspects were later identified as Aftab Mohsin, Waqas Waheed and Moazzam.

In the firing, Moharrar of police check post, Shahzad, and Constable Adnan and a passer-by, Aashiq, sustained injuries. The suspects managed to flee the scene whereas the injured were later shifted to Aziz Bhatti Shaheed Teaching Hospital (ABSTH).

Police have registered a case against four nominated and an unidentified suspect on the report of ASI Shafqat Jamal.

BODY FOUND: Police found the charred dead body of an unidentified woman who was reportedly tortured to death before being burnt.

The body was found in a sack at the bank of Bhimber rainwater drain near Kot Bela village of Rehmania police.

The locals had spotted the body and informed the police who shifted it to the ABSTH where doctors later conducted an autopsy.

A spokesman for Gujrat police said as per the initial investigation, the woman had reportedly been killed through torture before being burnt by the suspects.

Police lodged the case against unidentified suspects on the report of a local resident of Tibba Botey Shah.

Two arrested for attempting to sell minor girl to dacoits

By Our Correspondent

BAHAWALPUR: The Shah Shammas police station of Multan on Sunday claimed to have foiled an attempt to sell a minor girl to the Katcha dacoits and arrested two alleged abductors, including a woman.

According to the police, one Abdul Rehman complained to the police that his neighbours Ali and his mother Samina Bibi allegedly abducted his 12-year old daughter Mehnaz Bibi and stole his motorcycle.

Police claimed that after registration of the abduction case, a police team with the help of geofencing and latest technology traced the abductors in Rahim Yar Khan district. Police claimed to recover the girl during a raid and also arrested the mother and son.

Shammas police said that the duo wanted to sell the minor girl to the Katcha dacoits but the attempt was foiled.

Further investigations were ongoing.

33 booked as rival groups clash in hospital

By Our Correspondent

OKARA: Rival groups resorted to shooting, damaging windows and glass doors of the City DHQ hospital's trauma centre they were visiting to get medico-legal certificates following a fight in their village. Five members of the group were injured in the scuffle.

As per the first information report, both groups continued their fight on the hospital premises, beating each other and firing into the air. A police team, headed by a sub-inspector (SI) positioned near the press club, received an emergency call at 15 and rushed to the spot. On seeing the policemen, both groups escaped.

Police registered a case against Ali Akbar, Zain, Amir, Rana Waqas and Bilal along with 11 others of one group and 21 members of the other group, including Azeem, Ihsaan, Amin, Tanvir and Ghulam Haider, on the report of SI Abid Ali. Police claimed to have arrested five suspects in the case.

Two cops die, seven injured in road crash

By Our Correspondent

TOBA TEK SINGH: Two Multan special branch police official died and eight others were injured when their van hit a trailer going ahead of it near Samundri Interchange on M-3 motorway on Sunday.

As per the motorway police and Rescue 1122 officials, a van carrying police officials was

going to Multan from Lahore when it hit the trailer allegedly because of brake failure.

As a result, Zafar Iqbal (48) of Lodhran, a supervisor of Multan special branch police died on the spot, while his eight colleagues were wounded.

The injured policemen were given first aid by a Rescue 1122 team called to the scene, and of them three – Qadeer Ahmad (36), Nauman Mahmood (36) and Muqtida Abdullah (44) – were shifted to the Samundri THQ Hospital given their serious condition.

Another injured special branch official, Qamar Hussain (38) of Vehari, who was shifted to the THQ hospital by motorway police, later died too.

Meanwhile, in another incident, the driver of a private ambulance died after the vehicle collided head on with a truck near Chak 291 GB on Toba-Rajana Road on Sunday.

Rescue 1122 report says that the speeding ambulance was on its way to Rajana, while the truck was coming from opposite direction, when they collided. The deceased van driver was identified as Fahad Akram (19).

LABOURER DIES: A labourer died allegedly when a wall fell on him in a housing colony near Rana Marble Factory at Nankana Sahib.

Rescue 1122 report says the labourer, identified as Aslam (35), was dismantling a dilapidated wall when it suddenly collapsed on him. He died instantly.

'Neglected' Iqbal Stadium to host int'l cricket after 17 years

Stadium is managed by the Iqbal Stadium Management Committee instead of the Punjab Sports Board or the Pakistan Cricket Board

By Tariq Saeed

— Dawn

TOBA TEK SINGH: International cricket is set to return to Faisalabad's historic Iqbal Stadium after 17 years as Pakistan and South Africa face off in a ODI series starting Tuesday (tomorrow).

While excitement runs high among citizens over the revival of international cricket, serious concerns persist regarding the stadium's neglected condition and lack of any upgrades in over two decades.

Despite generating millions of rupees annually, the stadium remains largely neglected. Nearly 90pc of the spectator stands lack proper seating, forcing fans to sit on bare concrete steps during matches, while the stands have no roofing.

The management of the Iqbal Stadium does not fall under the jurisdiction of the Punjab government or the Punjab Sports Board or the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB). Instead, the stadium is controlled by the Iqbal Stadium Management Committee (ISMC), which comprises nine government officials and local businessmen.

According to the documents obtained by a citizen named Naeem Khan under the Punjab Transparency and Right to Information Act, additional deputy commissioner (general) as the ISMC secretary informed that ISMC earned over Rs63 million annually, while its expenditures were Rs30.9 million.

Covering over 36 kanals and 15 marlas, the stadium complex includes more than 100 commercial shops, offices, restaurants, and recreational facilities. The revenue from these establishments was deposited directly into the ISMC's account rather than the provincial treasury.

The documents further revealed that during the Champions Cricket Cup 2024 (held at the country level, , the ISMC did not spend a single rupee on arrangements. Instead. the PCB earned over Rs15 million in gate money, while the Punjab government covered Rs35 million in security and logistic costs from the public exchequer.

Cricket fans have urged the Punjab government to transfer the management of the stadium to the PCB, so that it could be upgraded and maintained on the same lines as Lahore's Gaddafi Stadium.

Meanwhile, all roads leading from the Faisalabad airport to the city were closed to traffic on Sunday during the arrival of the South African cricket team and strict security measures were adopted by the police.

Citizens facing problems at Gujrat Arazi centre

Claim staff extorting money for land ownership and sale documents; PLRA spokesperson says unavailability of services is due to delays in provision of records by *patwaris*

By Waseem Ashraf Butt

GUJRAT: Citizens are complaining of facing inconveniences at the Gujrat Arazi Record Centre (ARC) as well as allegedly being exploited by the staff for issuance of property ownership documents on the pretext of blocked computer data or declaring it as inaccessible.

The problem is more pronounced in the computerised revenue estates located in the outskirts of the Gujrat city, as well as in Kunjah and Jalalpur Jattan towns.

Official sources said that though computerisation of at least 50 muazas (revenue estates) falling in the urban revenue circles had been declared complete, but thousands of the mutations were yet to be entered into the database of the Punjab Land Record Authority (PLRA).

However, an ARC official claimed that the newly-computerised mauzas under the PLRA were blocked owing to multiple reasons, causing hindrance in the transaction of property.

He claimed that thousands of mutations were yet to be computerised, which was to be completed by a private firm that had been hired for manually digitising the revenue record. However, according to some informed sources, the firm had abandoned the task, which had caused delay in the computerisation process. Due to this, transactions across Punjab were being affected causing delays in collection of taxes, said a senior official privy to the matter.

Meanwhile, officials at the Gujrat ARC had been accused of extorting money from citizens seeking land ownership and sale documents.

Residents of Jatowkal, Aduwal, Narowali, Lindpur, Tibi Gurian, Saboowal, Chak Mehmda and Sultanpura had alleged that for obtaining a simple fard (ownership certificate) or sale deed, they had to pay extra money to the ARC officials. Residents claimed that officials routinely declare computer data "blocked" or "inaccessible" to delay the process, forcing applicants to make hefty payments to get their documents issued.

A senior official of the land revenue department claimed that most of the service centre officials (SCOs) had been working on their posts for the past eight to 10 years, during which they had established deep roots and powerful connections.

Official sources claimed that due to these tactics at ARC, the ratio of processing of registration documents in several urban circles had also been affected, resulting in the loss of millions of rupees to the national exchequer.

A PLRA spokesperson said that unavailability of services at the ARCs were due to the delay in provision of manual revenue records by the patwaris, as the ARC staff could not block or unblock data.

When contacted, the spokesperson said that the revenue field staff had yet to submit the complete manual records at their respective ARCs, which was causing problems. However, he said that if evidence of any ARC's staff involvement in malpractice was provided to the PLRA, stern action would be taken by the PLRA director general.

LAHORE: Wholesalers unload live chicken at Dehli Gate. — White Star

LDA directed to accelerate construction work

Authority currently working on four roads, which are expected to significantly reduce traffic congestion

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: The government has directed the Lahore Development Authority (LDA) to accelerate the construction work for the timely completion of the new structure plan roads in the city.

"You must accelerate the pace of work on all structure plan roads. The work on all missing links of these roads should also be started immediately to improve traffic flow in the city," sought Housing, Urban Development and Public Health Engineering Department Secretary Noor ul Amin Mengal, while inspecting the ongoing construction works.

He reviewed the ongoing construction work from the Shadiwal Chowk to the Nazaria-e-Pakistan Road and from the Ayub Chowk to the Abdul Sattar Edhi Road along with LDA DG Tahir Farooq. During the visit, the DG briefed the secretary about the progress of various packages of the roads. PHA DG Raja Mansoor, Wasa MD Ghafran Ahmed and officers from Nespak were also present on the occasion.

The LDA is currently working on four roads in the city, which are being constructed under the Sustainable Development Model. Completion of the new roads will significantly reduce traffic congestion in urban areas.

The secretary emphasised that the quality of construction work must be ensured in accordance with the SOPs, while water sprinkling and strict implementation of smog SOPs must also be ensured during the construction activities.

TAX RECOVERY DRIVE: The Punjab Revenue Authority (PRA) has intensified its province-wide drive to recover taxes and curb irregularities in tax payments.

Enforcement teams carried out inspections of marriage halls, marquees, restaurants and fast-food chains in Lahore, Sahiwal and Bahawalpur.

According to the PRA spokesperson, records of three business points were seized due to serious discrepancies in sales declarations and tax deposits. Several establishments earning millions of rupees monthly were found declaring only a fraction of their actual income.

In Gujranwala and Bahawalpur, more than Rs10 million were recovered during the enforcement operations.

He added that multiple unregistered businesses and those not using the Electronic Invoice Monitoring System (E-IMS) had also been served notices.

Strict action would be taken against those who collected taxes from customers but failed to deposit them in the government treasury, he added.

Governor vows to raise voice for farmers at every forum

By Our Staff Reporter

LAHORE: Governor Punjab Sardar Saleem Haider Khan visited the office of the Punjab Kisan Board on Sunday and met with a delegation of farmers where he promised to raise their concerns at every forum.

Speaking to the delegation, Governor Haider said that during the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) tenure, it ensured that farmers were paid the full price for their wheat. He urged the current government to do the same, keeping in view the difficulties being faced by the farming community.

He noted that the recent floods had destroyed crops, leaving farmers in severe financial distress. He stressed that the government must stand by them in this difficult time. He said the PPP had made efforts to secure one month's relief in electricity bills for farmers and flood victims, reaffirming that the party represents the farmers, labourers, and the working class.

The governor highlighted the vital role of agriculture in Pakistan's economy and said that farmers, through their hard work, provide the nation with wheat. "I understand the problems of farmers and will raise my voice for them at every forum," he assured.

He emphasised that the use of modern agricultural machinery was essential in the current era, and that improving the quality of crop seeds was also crucial for enhancing productivity in the agricultural sector.

Mr Haider further stated that it was the government's responsibility to provide a conducive environment for the sale of wheat and that ensuring economic stability in the country was the government's top priority.

He warned that those creating obstacles in the path of national progress would be dealt with firmly, adding that the current political leadership and Field Marshal Asim Munir had successfully restored global confidence in Pakistan.

Bank employee held for harassing customer

SAHIWAL: Farid Town police arrested a private bank employee on charges of harassment and intimidation of a woman customer.

The suspect, identified as Zeeshan Haider, allegedly threatened the victim with dire consequences, including murder, after she refused to enter a relationship with him.

According to the report, the complainant 'S'—a young housewife living in a private housing society on Madhali Road—had applied for a bank loan by submitting her documents to Zeeshan Haider, an employee of the bank. Haider unlawfully accessed S's photograph from her loan application file and uploaded it on various social media platforms without her consent. He then began pressuring her to enter into a relationship with him. Despite her repeated refusals, the harassment continued.

The situation escalated when Haider allegedly issued threats of serious consequences, including murder. S subsequently complained to Farid Town police who arrested the suspect. **— Correspondent**